This course examines the formation and the development of modern Israel. The course focuses on the historical, social and cultural origins of Zionist ideology, Israel’s founding ideology, as well as on role of the Holocaust; the Arab-Jewish conflict; the Ashkenazi-Mizrahi and secular-religious divide in the development of contemporary Israeli society.

Throughout the course students will engage with a variety of primary sources, from historical documents to literary and cinematic works, and a variety of secondary sources. Israel tends to dominate the headlines of media outlets around the world, in this course we will go beyond the headlines and explore from an intellectual and academic perspective the forces and conditions that have shaped the modern Israeli experience.